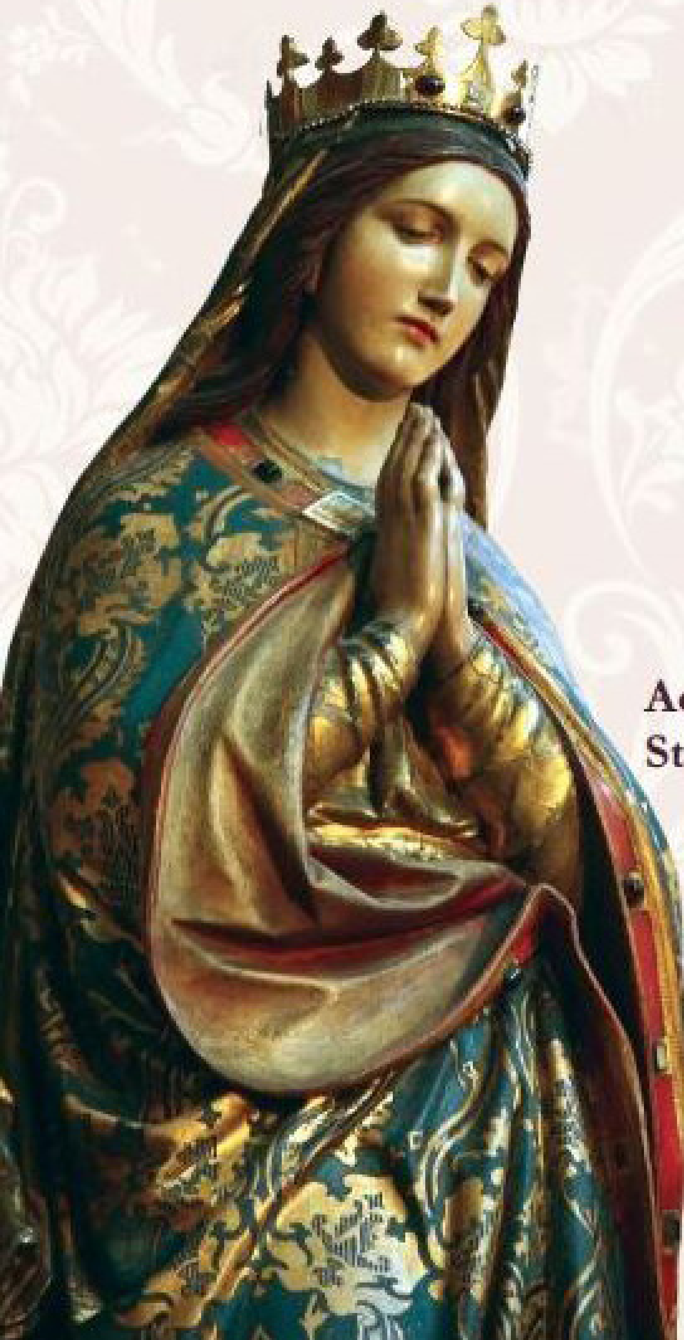
She Leadeth Me



According to
St. Maximilian Kolbe

Sancta Maria

She Leadeth Me

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TRUE DEVOTION TO MARY

according to
St. Maximilian Kolbe
in his very own words.

Compiled and translated by
A Dominican Friar

Sancta Maria

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Contents

Introduction

Many good books have been written about the life and the doctrine of St. Maximilian Kolbe, but unfortunately access to his very own words is not easy for Anglophones who do not know Italian or Polish. This is a great shame because these words have a profound simplicity and power about them that only the Holy Ghost can give. What is more, we have a large volume of his personal writings and conferences from very sure sources that provide texts that are furnished with all the guarantees of authenticity that even the most severe critic could require, especially in what concerns his writings. The monumental *Scritti Kolbiani* of Fr. Cristoforo Zambelli provides an excellent Italian translation of the entire corpus of Maximilian Kolbe's writings, including all his articles and letters and even the journals he kept and personal notes of his retreats and other matters.[1] There exists also in Polish a col-

1 *Scritti di Massimiliano Kolbe* (Rome: Editrice Nazionale M.I., 1997). References to this work will be made by the initials SK followed by a number corresponding to the number used in this edition to identify all the various writings of Father Kolbe. [Section sources have been placed as endnotes for ease of reading.]

lection of notes taken by his Brothers of spiritual conferences that he gave to them in Poland and in Japan as well.[2] It is in order to enable English speakers to have immediate access to some of this immense treasure that this little selection of his words has been compiled.

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2 *Konferencje Swietego Maksymiliana Marii Kolbego* (Niepokalanów: Wydwnictwo OO. Franciszkanów, 1990). References will be made to this work by the simple initial K followed by the number of the conference. Critics generally question the absolute reliability of these notes, but even though it is certain that they are not always complete and perhaps sometimes not precisely accurate, they were obviously prepared with great effort and a scrupulous care not to attribute to him things he did not say. They remain an invaluable source of his doctrine that must not be neglected, for they are a precious witness of his personal teaching to his closest disciples.

Prayer Is Necessary

1. In order to maintain our consecration to the Immaculate and progress in it, we must constantly renew these truths in ourselves and our relationship with her either by suitable books, or meditations, etc. But what is most important, the Immaculate herself will dictate to us in humble prayer.

2. The words "through the Immaculate" are a mystery, and not everyone manages to understand them.

3. This is a mystery which surpasses our intelligence, therefore we cannot fathom it. We will not learn it in books, but only on our knees.

4. He who loves will know the Immaculate much more than a philosopher or a theologian.

5. It is a very good thing to study Mariology, but let us always remember that we know the Immaculate more in humble prayer and in the loving experience of daily life than in learned definitions, distinctions, and arguments (although we may not neglect them). She is such a sublime person, so close to the Most Holy Trinity that one of the holy Fathers doesn't hesitate to call her *"complementum Sanctissimae Trinitatis,"* that

is, "the complement of the Most Holy Trinity." It is no wonder, then, if the limited intelligence of man should lose its bearings when it wants to investigate her mystery, and a presumptuous brain will be stupefied even more.

6. Thank the Immaculate that she has given you the grace to understand practically her mystery, as Blessed Grignion[3] says, and pray that she deign to concede this grace also to the others. In fact, it is not so much with our limited intelligence as by the grace of the Holy Ghost that the conviction of these sublime mysteries penetrates our hearts and develops there. But here it is indispensable to have much, very much humility.

7. In general, it can seem that we already know, that we are already acquainted with who the Mother of God is, but in reality we must confess that we know very little about her. There are a few books about it, but all that isn't much; they are just little first tries. It is like an unknown world . . .

What can we do in order to know, with such great profit, who the most holy Mother is? First of all, we must not trust in our own intelligence. The intellect is too weak to be able to manage

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3 St. Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort.

on its own. Here it is not sufficient to think for oneself. Reasoning can lead to a detour. Grace is necessary; supernatural light is necessary; prayer is necessary. Only prayer can obtain this knowledge of who the most holy Mother is. This is the efficacious means to arrive at this knowledge.

It is necessary, then, to pray with humility; it is necessary to tell oneself clearly that even the just falls seven times a day (Prov. 24:16), even he who can be called just, so much more so ourselves . . . The most holy Mother is without the least stain of sin; she is holy, full of grace, such that she was worthy to become the Mother of God Himself. With such humility, then, we, unworthy, must present ourselves before her.

But also let our prayer for this grace, that we might know who the most holy Mother is, be made with humility, with deep humility. Duns Scotus left us a perfect example of such prayer when he said: "*Dignare me laudare te, Virgo sacrata; da mihi virtutem contra hostes tuos*—Deign to let me praise thee, O sacred Virgin, and give me strength against thine enemies." Therefore with such a humility we must pray to her as to the Immaculate, as to one being in closest union with God. Let us humbly pray that she might be so gracious that she deign that we might glorify

her, that we might venerate her. Obviously, humble prayer doesn't exclude thinking about this, reading about it, meditating about it. Read much about the most holy Mother, think about her often, meditate about her often. But the foundation, as it were, is prayer, humble prayer. And not only read, but also pray before reading, and in the meditation ask her to enlighten us, because we are not worthy of the grace of knowing who she is.

8. In order to understand more profoundly who the Immaculate is, it is absolutely indispensable to recognize one's own nothingness, and resolve to offer a humble prayer in order to obtain the grace of knowing her and do all that one can to experience in one's own life her goodness and power. It is well worth it to try.

9. When you gird yourself in preparation to read something on the Immaculate, don't forget that at that moment you are entering into contact with a living being who loves you and who is pure, free from all stain. . . . She herself will manifest herself through the intermediary of the thoughts you will read and will communicate thoughts, convictions, and sentiments that the author himself was utterly incapable of imagining.

10. Human language must serve merely to make the soul approach her, because it will be she herself who will manifest herself more and more clearly to the soul. . . . Approaching directly to her heart you will attain a greater knowledge of her and be inflamed by a greater love for her than all human words together could teach you.

Mediation

11. Our dependence on Mary is greater than we can imagine. We receive all graces, absolutely all of them, from God through the Immaculate, who is our universal mediatrix with Jesus.

12. God the Father, through the Son and the Holy Ghost, does not make supernatural life descend in the soul except through the Mediatrix of all graces, the Immaculate, by her consent, by her collaboration. She receives all the treasures of grace as her property and distributes them to whom she wills and in the measure that she herself chooses.

13. As the first-born, the God-man, was not conceived but by the explicit consent of the heavenly Virgin, so also, and not in any other way, it happens in the divine birth of other human beings, who must exactly imitate in all things their Prototype.

14. I pray you to tell the Brothers not to be afraid at all to love the Immaculate too much since . . . they will never love her like Jesus loved her. Now all our sanctity consists in imitating Jesus. He who approaches her, by that very fact

approaches God; he just does it by following the shortest, surest, easiest road.

15. The most holy Mother is Mediatrix of all graces without exception. . . . Therefore the life of grace of a soul depends on the degree of its closeness to her. The closer a soul approaches her, the more pure it becomes, the more lively becomes its faith. Its love becomes more beautiful, and all virtues, being the work of grace, are strengthened and vivified. We cannot seek grace anywhere else because she is its Mediatrix.

16. The conversion and sanctification of a soul has been, is now, and will always remain, the work of divine grace. . . . But grace, for ourselves and for others, is obtained by humble prayer, by mortification, and by fidelity in the accomplishment of our own ordinary duties, including the simplest ones. The closer a soul is to God, the more pleasing she is to God, the more she loves Him and is loved by Him, then the more efficaciously she is able to help others also to obtain divine grace, the more easily and fully is her prayer heard. Consequently also, the Immaculate—being without stain, totally belonging to God—is so absolutely full of grace and is the Mediatrix of all graces for all other souls. And we, recognizing our weakness, our frequent falls, our separa-

tion from God, turn to her precisely for this: to obtain every sort of grace for ourselves and for others.

17. Let us never fear to pray directly to Our Lord Jesus, to the Most Holy Trinity; precisely the more we are given up to the most holy Mother, the more boldly will we do this, for we have her to pray for us.

18. All our perfection depends on the close union of our will to the will of the Immaculate. As soon as we are united to the most holy Mother, to her will, to her desires, to her affections, then immediately we can have no doubt about our spiritual progress. The more we are with her, the more we will be her, God Himself, if I may speak this way, because then our will, our actions, our progress will not be ours but hers, and therefore divine, for the Immaculate is so closely united to God that whatever is hers is, by that very fact, divine. The way we must follow is with the most holy Mother to Our Lord Jesus, and with Our Lord Jesus and the most holy Mother to the Most Holy Trinity. One can go to Our Lord Jesus or the Most Holy Trinity directly, not excluding, however, the most holy Mother, for to tend toward God without Mary, if it is with an express exclusion of her, is pride

and something diabolical, and the essence of sin is always pride, that is, non-conformity with the will of God; and the will of God is this, that we go to Him by this road, that is, through the most holy Mother.

Let us suppose someone wants to go to Danzig and he says: "Will I go to Danzig or will I go to the train?" Surely, by the train to Danzig. Or someone wants to go on the roof, so he says: "Will I go on the roof or on the ladder?" Obviously, by the ladder onto the roof. Thus we also do not have a surer and easier road to heaven than the Immaculate.

Let us strive only to belong to the Immaculate, to be hers, completely hers. If we give ourselves to her, she herself will lead us to the Heart of Jesus, to the Blessed Sacrament, to the Most Holy Trinity. When we approach her, then truly will we know and love Our Lord Jesus. Precisely for this reason do we sit on the train so that we can go to Danzig . . .

19. We know that the most perfect of all creatures is the Mother of God. She is Immaculate, full of grace, all beautiful. And God receives in her the greatest glory. She is so perfect and united to the Holy Ghost that she has been called His Spouse.

Everything goes ordinarily from the Father through the Son and the Spirit and, in return, again through the Spirit and the Son to the Father.

This is why we love and honor so much the Immaculate, because she is so holy and because the Holy Ghost acts through her.

That is why we offer her everything: our whole life, our death and our eternity, so that she dispose of us according to her will.

Such a soul, who has offered herself without limits to the Immaculate, expresses by this that she wants to seek Jesus in her and through her alone, and through Jesus make her way to God the Father.

In practice we know that the soul that is completely and without limits offered to the Immaculate understands Jesus and the divine mysteries better. For the Mother of God cannot lead anywhere else—only to Jesus.

Our holy father St. Francis said, "My God and my all." But such a soul can boldly say also: "The Immaculate and my all, all—all."

Whatever is outside of her cannot be the object of our love. In her we find all. She is, in a certain sense, the personification of the Holy Ghost. That is why we love her ardently.

20. The Lord God decreed that we should receive everything from God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—the Immaculate. This is the unique route for all grace.

In the Old Testament one addressed God directly in fear and trembling. Our Lord Jesus Christ came and taught us to address ourselves to God the Father through His mediation, saying that no one comes to the Father but by Him (Jn. 14: 6). And from that time Holy Church especially emphasizes the honor due to Our Lord Jesus Christ and in all her prayers adds "through Christ our Lord." Nonetheless, the relation of creatures to God was not yet ideal—creature and Creator, the infinite and the finite. Thus Jesus said to the Apostles: "Now you cannot understand this and you will understand only by the Holy Ghost" (cf. Jn. 16:12-13). For far more perfect is the honor given to God through the Holy Ghost, that is, through the Immaculate, His Spouse, whom He penetrates entirely, to the point that He is, as it were, incarnate in her, only they remain two persons and two natures. The will of the Immaculate is most intimately united to the will of the Holy Ghost in such a way that it is completely identified with it. That is why when we give ourselves to the Immaculate

and accomplish her will, by that very fact we give ourselves to Jesus and we accomplish His will—but in the most perfect way that man can ever attain. Thus we become, as it were, immaculate, and therefore more agreeable to God, and it is no longer we, but she through us and in us who offers a most sublime honor to the Most Holy Trinity. Every prayer through the mediation of the Immaculate and every act of accomplishing her will glorifies God and adores Him in the most perfect manner, for it confesses His infinite omnipotence in creating a being so perfect, so sublime and so holy. The Immaculate is this . . . link, this lever that unites us to God. In so far as she is a creature she is close to us, but in so far as she is the Mother of God she touches the Divinity. That is also why the honor offered to God by the Immaculate is the highest, the most perfect, the most adoring honor and procures for Him the [greatest] glory. If we were to leave aside the Immaculate, we would greatly displease the Most Holy Trinity.

In all boldness we can affirm that our highest ideal is the Immaculate. A man cannot rise any higher than this. The Immaculate is the highest degree of perfection and sanctity of a creature. No man will ever attain this celestial sum-

mit of grace, for the Mother of God is unique. However, he who gives himself without limits to the Immaculate will in a short time attain a very high degree of perfection and procure for God a very great glory. All through the Immaculate, in the Immaculate, and for the Immaculate.

21. Our acts, even the most holy of them, are not without faults, and if we wish to offer them to Christ pure and without stain, we must present them directly to the Immaculate alone and give them to her as her property, in order that she offer them, as her own, to her Son.

22. Through the Immaculate our acts of love become without stain, since they belong to her, just as we do.

23. If we belong to the Immaculate, then everything we have belongs to her also, and Jesus accepts everything that comes from us as if it came from her, as if it belonged to her. In this case she cannot leave these actions imperfect, but renders them worthy of herself, that is, immaculate, without the least stain. . . . That is why Satan wants absolutely to separate souls from union with the Immaculate, because He knows that a soul who excludes the mediation of the Immaculate offers to Jesus gifts that are so full of imperfections that they are more worthy of

chastisement than recompense. And the worst of it is that these gifts are poisoned with pride, because one believes that one has no need of the Immaculate.

24. From now on it will not be just we ourselves who offer these daily affairs to God, but it will be she, the Immaculate, of whom we have become the property, who will present them to God. Mary, then, offers all this not as if it were ours, full of faults and imperfections, but as her own personal property, since we, along with all that is ours, belong to her. . . . The Immaculate, however, cannot offer to God anything that is stained with sin. We see, then, that in her immaculate hands our imperfect actions become pure, without stain and, therefore, incomparably more precious.

25. The soul offers to the Immaculate its own acts of love not as one consigns an object to just any intermediary, but as her property, as her complete and exclusive property, since it understands that the Immaculate offers to Jesus these acts as if they were her own, which means that she offers them without stain, immaculate; Jesus, then, offers them to the Father.

Instrument

26. Let us imagine ourselves to be a little brush in the hand of an infinitely perfect painter. What must the little brush do so that the painting will be as beautiful as possible? It must let itself be directed most perfectly. A little brush could still advance pretexts to improve the painting done by an earthly, limited, fallible painter, but when God, the eternal Wisdom, uses us as instruments, then we will do the most, in the most perfect way, when we let ourselves be guided most perfectly and totally.

By the act of consecration we have offered ourselves to the Immaculate as her absolute property. Without doubt she is the most perfect instrument in the hands of God, while we, for our part, must be instruments in her immaculate hands.

When, therefore, will we destroy most rapidly and most perfectly the evil that exists in the whole world? When we let ourselves be guided by her in the most perfect way. This is the most important thing, the unique thing.

I said "unique." In fact, each one of us must occupy himself solely in harmonizing, conform-

ing, fusing, as it were, completely his own will with the will of the Immaculate, just as her will is completely united to the Will of God, her heart with the Heart of her Son Jesus.

That is the unique thing we have to do. Whatever we do, even if it were the most heroic act, capable of overthrowing the foundations of all existing evil on earth, it has a certain value uniquely if, in performing this act, our will puts itself in harmony with the will of the Immaculate and, through her, with the Will of God. One thing alone, therefore, that is, the fusion of our will with hers, has a certain value, or rather a total value. This is the essence of the love (not sentiment, although that be beautiful too) that must transform us, through the Immaculate, in God, that must burn us and, through us, set the world on fire and destroy, consume in it all evil. It is the fire of which the Saviour spoke: "I have come to cast fire upon the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled!" (Lk. 12:49).

After having been inflamed ourselves by this divine love (I repeat that it is not a question here of sweet tears or sentiments, but of the will, even amidst aversion and repugnance), we will set on fire the whole world.

Nonetheless, it is we who must inflame ourselves, we who must not let ourselves grow cold, but burn ever more intensely; we must fuse ourselves with, become one sole thing with God, through the Immaculate.

We must, therefore, concentrate all our attention on this, uniquely on this: to unite ourselves most closely with the hand of our Mistress, our Leader, to meld ourselves to it so that she might do with us what she wills. This is the essential condition for belonging to the M.I.: "Consecrate oneself totally to the Immaculate as an instrument in her immaculate hands."

Then and only then will we be subject to the Immaculate and, through her, unite, fuse the whole world and every single soul with the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus through the fire of love.

27. We are an instrument in the most loving hands of the Immaculate, and only in this way can we attain our ultimate end: the glory of God, not just a greater glory but the greatest glory possible. All our solicitude, therefore, must be to let ourselves be led so that we do nothing according to our own ideas, but everything that she desires and as she pleases.

28. It is necessary for us, as quickly as possible, to renounce ourselves. It is necessary that

we have nothing, but nothing of our own, that she act, that we be her instrument. How easy it is for each of us to let ourselves fall into wanting to work with great zeal, but often according to our own opinions. But here it is necessary that the Immaculate act through us, and it is a matter of being an instrument in her hands and not of doing the greatest things possible according to our own ideas. She is the most perfectly capable of making everything turn to the glory of God. Often we just ruin things for her. Everything depends on this, on how much we are her instruments. Nothing else is left for us other than just to conform our will to hers. There is no higher summit of perfection than this—the most perfect union of our will with her will.

29. I will say something more, and I will say it boldly: if we are given up entirely to the Immaculate, if we constantly strive to be so, then our bad works—although perhaps not done with bad will, but still bad—she will repair them and even more: She will turn them into a greater good. And she will even work miracles, if it be necessary, because for the Immaculate to work a miracle is not something great. And then our works and efforts will not be ours but hers, and they will have a value that is not our own but

of the Immaculate. We will just be her instruments, like a shovel in the hands of a gardener. The shovel digs, but it isn't its work, but the gardener's alone. What a great consolation this is for us, then, already in this world, but all that much more in the next.

The Will

30. Let us not forget that the essence and the perfection of our consecration are not in the sentiment nor the memory, but the will. Therefore, in the case where one doesn't experience at all the sweetness of intimate familiarity with her (although commonly it is the opposite) and one is incapable of remembering her and thinking for a long time about her for whatever reason, if his will remains beside her, if he does not revoke his consecration, but on the contrary, as far as he can renews it, then let him be at peace, because she reigns in his heart. And the will we can easily control. Let us be careful only to conform it always more perfectly to her will and accomplish this will of hers always more perfectly. This is everything.

31. It is a matter of the approaching of the will, the fusion of our will and the will of the Immaculate, just as her will is united most perfectly to the Will of God. Besides this, nothing else is necessary.

32. Let us try hard all day to accomplish her will. Let us offer the key of the bastion of our will to her so that she might conquer it to herself

as quickly as possible and then, through us, she will conquer others.

33. It is certain that the more our will approaches hers, the more we also approach her. If we are united to her will we can tell ourselves that we belong to her very much.

34. At any rate, the Immaculate knows everything and directs everything, on condition that we let ourselves be guided perfectly by her.

35. Since we have given ourselves to her without limits, therefore she, for her part, leads us.

Obedience

36. How can we know that the Holy Mother is asking something from us? . . . How must we know, where is revealed to us the divine will, the will of the Immaculate?

In holy obedience.

Our Lord Himself, although He was infinite Wisdom, did not choose for Himself any other way than obedience. He, being God, knew much better than the Holy Mother how to do this or that thing, but nevertheless He was obedient, because He saw in this the will of the Father. . . .

This, then, is the consecration to the Immaculate: Obedience. Accomplish it as she herself desires of us. . . . Let us deepen in ourselves every day [the knowledge] of this truth by spiritual reading, by meditation, by conversations during recreation, and especially in practice in our lives, in order to unite our will to the will of the Immaculate and by her will sanctify our will. . . .

We must execute our obedience willingly and with joy in order to prove that we have truly consecrated ourselves to the Immaculate, and not be like "one who has to be pushed"; [who

says:] "there where they put me, there will I stay." Rather, we must add energy and effort on our part in order to execute in the best way the task confided to us.

37. But from what source will we know the will of our Queen, of our Leader?

On this earth there is only one sure way: holy obedience to the representatives of God, whose will is everything that the Immaculate desires; with this difference, however (if humanly we can express ourselves in this way), namely that God directs everything according to justice, while the most holy Virgin, precisely because of the fact that she has been given to us as a mother, can shelter us, nullifying the blows of justice under her maternal mantle of mercy. This is why St. Bernard also affirms that God has reserved for Himself the economy of justice, while He has confided mercy to the most holy Virgin Mary.

38. I underline repeatedly the "will of the Immaculate" because we are consecrated to her without limits, therefore she directs us. But, if one can put it thus, the Will of God and the will of the Immaculate are not exactly the same thing because the will of the Immaculate is the will, not of the justice, but of the mercy of God, of which the Immaculate is the personification. We, then,

in so far as we are instruments in her hand, are at the service, not of the justice that punishes, but of conversion and sanctification, which are the effects of grace—and therefore of the mercy of God—and they pass through the hands of the Mediatrix of all graces. Consequently, as she is a most perfect instrument in the hand of God, in the hand of divine mercy, of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, thus we are an instrument in her hand. And thus, through her, we are an instrument of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that is, of the mercy of God. Therefore our motto is: "Through the Immaculate to the Heart of Jesus."

39. The fulfillment of the will of God is love, and love is the essence of sanctity. Merit and the essence of sanctity, then, are not in mortification, nor in prayer, nor in work, nor in rest, but only in obedience.

40. One of the brothers wrote me and asked me to write back to him and tell him how I love the Immaculate because he wants to love her in the same way. . . . I [recently]said that the perfection of obedience is the essence of love. What does that depend on? On sentiment perhaps? Sentiment isn't the essential thing. Sentiment is a passing thing. It can even be or not be. Love does not depend on sentiment. We mustn't be

worried if it is absent . . . Often sentiment is taken for love. If it is a matter of love for the Immaculate, one can permit oneself a lot [of sentiment]. Sentiment, then, also is good. However, above all is the perfection of obedience, the fusion of our will with her will.

It is necessary to deepen always this supernatural obedience. We easily confound supernatural obedience and natural obedience. Often a soul is persuaded that she is supernaturally obedient when in fact it is shown that she is naturally obedient.

How can we know when obedience is supernatural? Let us consider some examples. A Jew will obey when what is said is wise and to his profit; an infidel, when what is said is in accord with his convictions; another, again, will obey because he will be praised for doing so. To obey in this way, even a pagan can do.

In order that obedience be supernatural it must not proceed from reason, but from faith. Holy Scripture says: "My just one shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17). The distance between faith and reason is infinite. The supernatural order is founded on faith. The soul, then, that bases itself on faith does infinitely more than a soul based on reason. It follows, then, that if we want our work

for the conquest of souls to bear fruit, we must conform ourselves more to the Will of God, or, in our language, to the will of the Immaculate.

When can we be sure that our obedience is supernatural? When in our obedience there are few natural motives. When our superior isn't perfect and perhaps is even disagreeable, and if then we accomplish the order with the same contentment as if it proceeded from a virtuous and wise man, then our obedience is supernatural. If, instead, the opposite is true, then there is room for much improvement. . . .

The perfection of obedience, then, is the perfection of love for the Immaculate. If, in spite of disagreeable feelings or a lack of feeling, we receive the order with the same contentment, then our obedience is perfect and one can say that it is supernatural obedience. If one thinks otherwise, if one is of another opinion, but one goes against this, then there is supernatural obedience. This doesn't mean that one must not give one's reasons when there is a need. If someone neglected to give his reasons that would not be a perfection. On the contrary, then, one can and must give one's reasons. It is simply a matter of the fact that both on the side of the inferior and on the side of the superior there be the liberty

to speak. The fact of giving one's reason from one's side is not an imperfection of obedience. Nevertheless, if the superior considers the reasons and nonetheless commands that the order be accomplished, one must leave aside one's reasons and do what obedience commands.

The more we follow this road of supernatural obedience, the more the Immaculate will be able to direct us. Let us deepen, then, the perfection of supernatural obedience.

41. In your letter you write that the Japanese were displeased to know that "Father Korube" didn't come back. Reassure them, dear Father, that it was the *Immaculate herself* who disposed things in this way because I had no desire at all to leave Mugenzai no Sono; on the contrary, I desired to leave my bones there at the foundation of the mission, but . . . my will was not done but that of the Immaculate. From the beginning, in fact, even before the Chapter, I had manifested to Most Reverend Father Provincial my availability to return to Mugenzai no Sono; nonetheless, the Immaculate had other plans. I still don't understand them completely, but little by little, according as it is necessary for me to act.

42. "When in 1939 the Conventual Franciscans of Poland divided into two provinces and

our authority took up residence in Warsaw, Father Maximilian rejoiced, saying that now it would be easier to know the Will of God because Father Provincial would reside so near Niepokalanów. I heard from the Brothers in Niepokalanów that in 1940 it was already practically certain that Father Maximilian would be arrested by the Gestapo. In the beginning, Father Maximilian wanted to hide somewhere in order to let the danger pass, but he didn't want to decide alone. He addressed himself to Warsaw to the Father Provincial, asking him his opinion. Father Provincial responded that it would be better if he stayed at Niepokalanów. This sufficed so that Father Maximilian abandoned any idea of leaving although shortly after he was, indeed, arrested."

43. If it is permitted to add some words, I would propose two things: (1) obedience, that is the easiest, shortest, and surest way to sanctity; more, supernatural obedience, the union of our will with the divine will, constitutes the very essence of sanctity, that is to say, perfect love; and (2) filial love, devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary. She will teach you perfect supernatural obedience; she herself will obtain and give you the strength to advance on this road; more, as

the best of mothers, she will carry you most securely in her arms, pressing you lovingly to her Immaculate Heart in the most difficult passages of the way.

These are just some words, albeit imperfect, but you will succeed in understanding much more by personal experience.

Always your brother in the Heart of the Immaculate,

Maximilian Maria Kolbe

In Practice

44. We give to her as her property everything, whatever we do. We give her as her property all that we are and all that we do. Then she gives it to Our Lord Jesus as her own. These are very deep things, but we learn them in humble prayer.

This is our ideal.

But how must we see this in practice? During all our actions must we remember our consecration; that everything we do is for the Mother of God?—No, it suffices that if we have once made this act of offering and if we have never consciously retracted it, then it exists, even though we may not think about it. A practical example: a carpenter makes a table on order [for someone]. Even though he doesn't constantly think about the fact that he is making the table for the one who ordered it, nevertheless he is making this particular table for him. When we have once given ourselves to the Immaculate as her property, this offering will always be valid even if we don't always think about it.

45. If the examination of conscience and meditation are very difficult, but not through our fault, that means that if, in spite of every-

thing, we strive to do them well, everything is in order. The Immaculate often, to increase our merit, veils the horizon to us with clouds of discouragement, doubt, worry, etc. If the will does not give itself to these thoughts, even if they last a long time, then we approach closer to the Immaculate. Everything depends on this, that at every instant, in every circumstance we let her lead us. The test of this is obedience. . . . We must be careful that there be no conflict between her will and ours.

We have offered her everything—therefore whatever is ours is her property and her affairs are ours. Her virtues, her merits are ours. Everything depends on this: how we will. Extraordinary prayers and mortifications aren't necessary, but just letting oneself be led.

46. Often we forget about the practical offering of ourselves to the Immaculate. What does this practical offering consist in? In the accomplishment of her will. In the union of our will to her will, as her will is immersed in God's Will. We know that the Will of God is made known to us in supernatural obedience. This is, as spiritual writers say, a sort of mystery of the faith.

47. We can consecrate ourselves to Mary using whatever expression we want as long as we

renounce our own will in order to adhere to her commands, which are presented to us in the commandments of God and the Church, in the duties of our state, and in interior inspirations.

48. We must let ourselves be led by her. The closer our union with her will be, the better will be the fruits. So let us strive for this one thing, that we be hers more and more. It isn't a matter here of strength of will, or fortitude; it is a matter of this, that she reign in us more and more, more and more delicately, so that we do not want to know why something is thus and not otherwise, so that for us sufficient are the words: She wills it.

A priest was telling me how, during a retreat of the Province, the superior, in sending him to another friary, explained to him the motives for doing so (this priest was already an old man) in order to lessen the sadness occasioned by the move. This priest, however, stopped him in order not to lose the merit of obedience. The soul that loves the Immaculate doesn't want to know reasons. It is enough for her that the Immaculate wills it so through the superiors. . . . It is a matter of this, that she reign within us. We must pray for this supernatural love of her.

49. You are hers: Let yourself be led by the Immaculate; all that doesn't depend on your will, surely she permits it for your good, even if it comes from the bad will of others. It is she who wills that it happen to you. . . . Don't forget that sanctity consists, not in extraordinary actions, but in accomplishing well your duties towards God, yourself, and others.

Nothing, not even the holiest state of life, assures the sanctification of your soul if you neglect the duties that derive from that state.

Try to see in your duties the certain will of the Immaculate, the accomplishment of which demonstrates your love for her and, in her and through her, for Jesus and the Father.

Even prayer, penance, and works that are good in themselves are not pleasing to her if they are an obstacle to accomplishing your duties well. Precisely in them, in fact, is found her will.

50. Devotion to the Immaculate is a secret that many don't know yet, or rather they know it but they practice it only superficially, when in reality it is, by the will of God, the substance of all sanctity.

51. Our ideal is to present to the Immaculate at every instant the offering of our life.

Discouragement

52. Most beloved sons, do not ever accept such a feeling. When you feel yourself to be at fault, even if it is a sin that is fully conscious, grave, and repeated many, many, many times, do not let yourselves be fooled by the devil into consenting to discouragement. But when you feel yourself to be at fault, offer your whole fault, without analyzing it and examining it, to the Immaculate as her property, pronouncing the sole name "Mary," as I just did a moment ago, and worry yourselves about pleasing her with the action that immediately follows, as I am doing in this moment, adding for you, most dear sons, these few words.

Dearly beloved, every fall, even if it be very grave and repeated, serves us always and only as a little step towards a higher perfection. For this alone, in fact, the Immaculate permits a fall, in order to heal us of our self-love, our pride, in order to lead us to humility and render us in this way more docile to divine graces. The devil, on the contrary, tries to inject despair and interior despondency, which are nothing else but a new sign of pride. If we knew well our wretchedness,

we would not wonder at all at our falls, but rather we would wonder and give thanks, after the fall, for not having fallen still lower and more often. There does not exist, in fact, a sin so grave into which we cannot fall if divine grace, that is, the merciful hand of the Immaculate, does not sustain us.

We don't want to feel continually the sweetness of devotion to the Immaculate either, because this would be spiritual greediness. Let us permit her to lead us as it pleases her, not as it pleases us. It is not always the time for sweet tendernesses, even if they are very holy. We also need trials, aridity, abandonments, and so on. Let us, then, permit her to use with full liberty the means of our sanctification. One thing alone must always be present and be deepened always: let ourselves be led by her, conform ourselves always more perfectly to her will, obedience to her will in holy obedience.

53. Dear Brother! After a long silence your letter made me rejoice. You must not worry at all about me being very busy, but freely write as soon as you feel the need. . . . With regard to our personal weaknesses, they must not discourage us at all, but, on the contrary, the more an instrument is wretched, so much more is it

fit to manifest the goodness and power of the Immaculate. . . . Discouragement would grieve the Immaculate. . . . Can someone be sad who is the property of the Immaculate? Which doesn't mean never stumbling, but if we happen to fall, we must conduct ourselves as true knights of the Immaculate and not get discouraged. . . .

Dear son, don't be sad, don't be troubled. The Immaculate knows and directs everything. Let us only let ourselves be led by her always more perfectly, and she herself in us and through us will do the maximum possible for the salvation of souls, to conquer them to herself and, through her, to the Heart of Jesus. With the help of the Immaculate we can do everything.

54. But someone will say: I don't have the strength for this, to progress in this way; others can do it but not me. That is precisely what it is all about, that we don't have the strength. And if someone feels this way, it is thanks to the most holy Mother. If someone feels he has the strength, then let him pray the Mother of God not to feel he has the strength because if someone relies on himself, then he truly is in danger of falling. Your whole point of support must be the Immaculate. We must never have confidence in ourselves.

We must simply say to the Immaculate: If you abandon me, then I will drag also others along to hell with me; there is no sin of which I am not capable, nothing so criminal that I could not commit it. If, however, you extend me your hand, then I will bring the whole world to you and I will become a saint, a great saint.

This is true humility, for we don't trust in ourselves but completely in the Immaculate. But someone will say: I can't manage to do such things. This is pride, because it attributes to oneself that one can still do the small things but not what is greater.

You, by yourself, can do nothing if you rely on your own strength. If we rely on the Lord God, we can do everything. Is the Lord God limited? Can He do little things but not great things? As soon as we rely on the Lord God we are giants. We can be sanctified! We can conquer our soul and the whole world to the Immaculate, but with her help, obviously.

55. What does that mean, conversion and sanctification through the Immaculate? That means that through the Immaculate come the graces necessary for conversion and sanctification. And indeed, although a sinner or a soul desiring to sanctify itself doesn't think about it,

what matters is that they know and recognize this mystery; that the soul truly turns directly to the Mother of God. When a soul does this, it will certainly receive the grace of conversion and sanctification; I underline: *certainly*. Ordinarily, if the sinful soul turns to the Lord God, it will receive the grace of conversion, but it can happen that the soul will not merit the grace of God because, on the contrary, it is fitting that the justice of God prevail. However, if the soul, even though it be I don't know how sinful, turns to the Immaculate, it will certainly receive grace. St. Bernard says that the Lord God kept for Himself justice, but gave mercy to the Mother of God. I don't deny that the Immaculate receives the mercy from the Lord God, but she is the personification of this divine mercy, and that is why a soul is converted and sanctified if it turns to her.

Therefore we know this truth, that through the Immaculate we can become great saints, and this in an easy way.

In order to sincerely proclaim this truth with conviction, it is first necessary to experience it oneself. Then it will be very easy to speak of it to others. A soul that has already given up and says: "I can't go on, it is too much for me," let her try

and put into practice for herself this truth and she will be convinced that she can do all things through the Immaculate. There is no heroism of which the soul is not capable with the help of the Immaculate.

56. Sometimes we have doubts: So often it happens that we have not been faithful to grace, with the result that we are no longer worthy of the help of God. But that is precisely why God has given us the heavenly Mother to whom He has confided the entire order of His mercy, so that He might, as it were, hide us from His justice. Therefore we have a way to go, through which we can always obtain the grace of God. We can never say that now it is no longer possible to obtain the grace of God. Without regard for whatever sins we have on our conscience, we can rise up from them if only we will turn to the Immaculate. If someone falls, let him turn to her with full confidence.

57. Let us also, like Saint Therese of the Child Jesus, be little flowers of the Immaculate, and she will teach us an unlimited confidence in the merciful love of God, of which she is the personification.

58. In the case of a fall, offer yourself immediately to her together with the whole affair of

your fall and ask for pardon: "Dear little Mother, pardon me and obtain pardon from Jesus." Seek to accomplish your next action in order to procure the greatest possible pleasure to her and to Jesus, and be certain that this act of love will completely annul that fault. In your first confession you will accuse yourself of this fall, but she, Jesus, and the Father will have already long forgotten it.

Peace and Confidence

59. Let us let ourselves be led, then; let us be *peaceful*, *peaceful;* let us not attempt to do *more* than that which she wills or *more quickly.* Let us let ourselves be carried by her; she will think of everything and take care of all our needs, of the soul and of the body. Let us give every difficulty, every sorrow to her, and have confidence that she will take care of it better than we could. *Peace*, then, *peace*, much *peace in an unlimited* confidence in her. The whole M.I.—it is not we who made it, and neither do we know it, nor can we lead it forward. If it is something of Our Lady, the obstacles will make it stronger; if it isn't, then let it fail: why should it get in the way? If also the (Blessed) Mother didn't want the M.I. to continue any longer and was satisfied with what has been done up to now, it is she who is our Lady, let us do what seems best to her.

60. Above all, never let yourselves be troubled, never be frightened, never fear anything. The Immaculate, in fact, is she perhaps not aware of everything? If this were not the case, it would really be a problem.

No one can do us any harm if God does not permit it, that is, if she doesn't consent to it. Everything, then, is in her maternal hands. Consequently, let us only let ourselves be led by her more and more every day, every instant. This is all our philosophy.

61. And what should we do when we don't have the strength for the execution of what obedience commands? Prayer, then, fervent, heartfelt prayer to the most holy Mother, even if it just be by the short invocation "Mary," and she will understand what we want to say, she will give strength to carry out [what is commanded]. We must have recourse to her like a child to its mother. When we fall, let us turn to the Immaculate, and she will lift us up, she will give us strength for the combat to come. Let us have complete confidence in her, dear Brothers; let us let ourselves be led by her and she will surely lead us to the happiness of heaven.

62. In reason of the present financial difficulties certain Brothers, as one can remark, have declined spiritually.

"What will happen?" [they ask themselves].

It is certain that such thoughts can come and that it is difficult to chase them away so that they don't come.

What was it like in the beginning [of the Militia Immaculatae, or the Knights of the Immaculate]?

At one time there was nothing to print *[The Knight]* with; everything was still done with the printing press of the tertiaries at Cracow. Then there came to me different thoughts. But then I thought: "Why are you tormenting yourself, since [the M.I.] isn't yours? If it's the Immaculate's, and she wants it to fail, let it fail. It's not ours. It's hers. As the Immaculate wants: [if she wants] it to develop, let it develop. If she wants there to be persecutions, let it be so."

What are we speaking of here?

From the beginning, she is the Owner. And we don't want anything else, this alone: what she wants, as she pleases. This is certainly what is more perfect and will lead to the conquest of the whole world. We must understand well who the owner is of Niepokalanów, of the printing press, and of ourselves.

For our part we must collaborate and do everything we can, but let us not lose our peace. She is directing this. We must turn to her in difficulties and find our calm again.

63. He who has a pure intention will never lose interior peace. And although exteriorly

there will be great activity, great sacrifices, and all around us storms and hurricanes will rage—nevertheless in the depth of our soul there will reign an unalterable silence, a deep peace . . . If we want to know whether we have this intention, let us ask ourselves whether we are striving to fulfill the will of the Immaculate or rather do we want to content ourselves. Here the fundamental thing is to seek nothing else but only her will, and therefore fulfill it as she herself desires.

64. He who loves the Immaculate will gain a sure victory in the interior combat.

65. We can exert ourselves, make efforts, write, and pray, but without ever losing our peace in the complete gift of ourselves to her.

66. When the soul reflects on the fact that it has given itself to the Immaculate, and that whatever happens to it occurs by her will, it is filled with a very great peace.

Mamusia

67. Let us endeavor, like a little child, to recognize our total dependence on her and, consequently, cling to her like sons to their mother.

68. It is not a matter here of kneeling down a long time and praying, but of this relationship of a child to its mother. A loving glance at her statue, the frequent repetition of the name *Mary*, even if it be just in our hearts. Different prayers and formulas are good and beautiful, but the essential thing . . . is the simple relationship of a child to its mother, this sense of our need for this mother, the conviction that without her we can do nothing.

69. If there be difficulties, in spite of them go on and approach even closer to the Immaculate—babble to her like a little child. Give everything over to her will—whether she wants to give us sweets or nourish us with dryness; be close to her by our will, in her arms. The way of the Immaculate, even though it be strewn at times with crosses and suffering, is not, nevertheless, all that burdensome and obscure. We always feel this maternal affection.

70. You ask me for a weekly program of the "Son of the Immaculate." Ask a weak little baby for the weekly program of its relations with its mother.

71. The Immaculate is taking care of me tenderly—really, very tenderly. She offers all the nourishment indispensable to the soul at the time and in the quantity necessary, but sometimes also sweetly embraces me.

72. "In the mouth of others this expression 'Mamusia'[4] seemed strange, but in him it was so natural and sincere that one saw that it sprang from his deepest experience."

73. At times, we will taste the joyful serenity of the little child who, abandoning itself without any reserve in the hands of its own mother, worries about nothing, fears nothing, confident in the wisdom, goodness, and power of its good mother. At times the storm will rage around us, thunderbolts will fall, but we, consecrated without limits to the Immaculate, will be sure that nothing will happen as long as our good little Mother doesn't permit it, and we will rest peacefully, working and suffering for the salvation of souls.

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4 A very strong term of endearment, being a diminutive of *Matka* (Mother): it might be translated by "mommy."

74. Now in all of this what is the role of the most holy Mother? Through whom did Jesus come into the world? Who brought Him up? To whom was He obedient?

The most holy Mother brought Him up; with her own breasts she nourished Him. He was obedient to her even during the three years of His apostolic life, and many times He emphasized the fact that He was fulfilling the will of His Father. Our Lord Jesus was born of the most holy Mother; He needed her help. She nourished Him, brought Him up, and wore herself out for Him.

What [lesson] is left for us here?[5]

Let ourselves be brought up by the most holy Mother according to the example of our Lord Jesus. We see, then, that the role of the most holy Mother is clear. . . .

What is sanctification? Sanctification is the reception of many great graces from God and the proper response to these graces.

In order, then, that this work be done successfully in us, let us go to the most holy Mother. What happens here must be similar to what happens in an earthly family. In families we see that

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5 *Nam cóz tu pozostaje*?

it is true that the father works and earns the bread and life's necessities, but who feeds the children if it isn't the mother? The mother, dishing up the plates, gives to each one their portion and the kind of food that is most fitting for each. But what sort of child would it be who would say that he didn't want a mother? It is the same in the supernatural family. These are echoes . . . echoes . . . according to which we must make parallels. The most holy Mother does the same thing. She distributes all graces, and gives when and what to whom and how as is most fitting. He who would disavow[6] her would be most ungrateful.

75. We will never offer her the love she merits, that with which she loves us.

76. It is not enough to always hoe and weed. One must sow the flowers so that they might grow and blossom. For the development of the flower sunshine and dew are needed. If there is no sunshine or dew, the little flower will not grow. . . .

In the soul it's the same. So that it might grow spiritually the sun must warm it, and it must have the dew of grace. But this sun and this dew are

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6 "*Zaparl.*"

nothing else but the Immaculate and her alone, for she is the Mediatrix of all graces. . . .

For flowers to blossom in the soul, they must receive the warmth of the light of the Immaculate. Just as an infant understands and feels instinctively that it will develop by being with its mother; that it must suck its nourishment from her breast so that it might live, so also the soul does not develop in any other way but by being with the Mother of God.

And we feel this ourselves in practice, that when our relation to the Immaculate grows cold, we go down spiritually. The devil knows this well, which is why he strives by every means to take us away from devotion to the Mother of God. He will propose other very holy devotions as long as they aren't to her, because then it will be easier for him to succeed. Let us, however, offer ourselves without limits to the Immaculate; let us not put any bounds to our love for her, and then will be verified what is written in Holy Scripture: "She shall crush your head, and you will lie in wait for her heel." The devil can only lie in wait for us, but the final result will always be: "She shall crush."

I exhort all of you, then, very much to this devotion.

To Become Her

77. [We must] belong to the Immaculate as servant, son, slave, thing, property, and so on: in a word, belong to her under every aspect. Annihilate oneself and become her. The fundamental element of such a transformation consists in conforming, in fusing, in uniting our will with hers.

78. Let us disappear in her! May she alone remain, but us in her, a part of her.

But is it licit for us, such wretched creatures, to rave in this way? Nonetheless this is the truth, this is reality.

79. She is of God. She is perfectly of God, even to the point of being, as it were, a part of the Most Holy Trinity, although she is a finite creature . . .

And then we are hers, of the Immaculate, hers without limits, most perfectly hers. We are, as it were, she herself. Through us she loves the good God. With our poor heart she loves her divine Son. We become the means through which the Immaculate loves Jesus, and Jesus, seeing us her property, a part, as it were, of His most beloved

Mother, loves her in us and through us. What exceedingly beautiful mysteries! . . .

We have heard of persons who are obsessed, possessed by the devil, through whom the devil thinks, speaks, acts. We want to be obsessed in this way, and even more, without limits, by her: may she herself think, speak, and act through us. We want to belong to the Immaculate to such a point that not only nothing else remains in us that isn't hers, but that we become, as it were, annihilated in her, *changed* into her, transubstantiated into her, so that nothing remains but she herself. That we might be hers as she is God's.

80. She herself wants to love this Heart [of Jesus] in [souls] and through them, be them themselves, and make them become herself.

81. Let us open our heart to her, let us let her enter there, and let us generously give her our heart, soul, and body and everything without any restriction or limit . . . in order to be her servants, her sons, her thing . . . and her unconditional property in such a way that we become, in a certain way, her herself living, speaking, acting in this world. . . . She herself is the Immaculate Conception. Therefore she is such also in us and she transforms us into herself as immaculate. . . . When we shall have become her, then

also all our religious life and its sources will be hers and she herself. [Our] supernatural obedience will be her will; our chastity, her virginity; our poverty, her detachment from earthly goods.

82. She herself must conquer our soul. [We must] give ourselves to her alone to be led, permit her to lead us, so that she herself—herself—acts. Someone says: no, I also will act and may the Mother of God help me. No, no. May she herself act. Let us just have recourse to her. . . . In the same way the most holy Mother has everything from God and she knows it.

83. Mary herself does everything.

84. She alone, however, will do all this.

85. Neither do I know in theory, and even less in practice, how one ought to serve the Immaculate, be her instrument, servant, son, slave, property, and, and . . . she herself. She alone must instruct each of us every moment, she must lead us, transform us into herself, so that it no longer be we who live but she in us, just as Jesus lives in her, and the Father in the Son.

Let us permit her to do in us and through us whatever she desires and she will surely accomplish miracles of grace: and we ourselves will become saints and great saints, very great, since, becoming really like her, she will conquer,

through us, the whole world and each individual soul.

86. We must tend towards this, that we love Our Lord Jesus as she loves Him; that our love be directed towards this summit, that it be the love of the Immaculate herself.

87. The soul of the Immaculate must live in us and work in us.

Missionary Zeal

88. He who wants to live the supernatural life clings to the Mother of Divine Grace. He who wants to convert and sanctify himself must have recourse to the Mother of God, for she is the Mediatrix of all graces. This mystery, that we receive everything through the Immaculate, is still little known. That is why we must propagate it; more, we must conquer the whole world to the Immaculate.

89. The end of the M.I. is to conquer to the Immaculate the whole world and every single soul that now exists and will exist in the future. It seems to me that in so far as she is "Mediatrix of all graces" she does not just desire to give sometimes and in some places the grace of conversion and sanctification, but she wants to regenerate all souls.

90. We show the greatest love for the Immaculate, then, if we convey her love to our neighbor.

91. It is a matter of this, that the Immaculate be more and more loved, and not only that we love her and offer our own love as fervently as

possible, but our end is to spread the love of the Immaculate throughout the whole world.

92. [He who enters the Militia], experiencing in his own life how much sweetness this closeness to the Immaculate gives, seeks to make others who live around him participate in his happiness.

93. But he who loves the Immaculate disinterestedly, that is, who loves her not for himself, but for her alone, doesn't content himself with just loving her, but will take action so that others will love her as well.

94. We, her knights, who are part of her bodyguard, cannot let this day go by without offering her our best wishes. But what can we wish still for her who, exalted above all creatures in heaven and on earth, has become the Mother of God and now reigns eternally in Paradise? She is the Queen of heaven and earth, she is the Mediatrix of us all; through her hands each grace flows upon the earth.

What must we wish to You, then, O most illustrious and most sweet Lady? . . . Many still do not know You . . . because they were born in paganism, or brought up in Judaism, or imbued with the deadly principles of Protestantism. Many know You but . . . they flee from You

or . . . they have abandoned You and now sink in the mud of immorality!

Well, then, O Queen, in this dear day of Your feast, we wish with all our hearts and souls that You might take possession completely and *as quickly as possible* of our hearts and the hearts of all and of everyone in particular without exception, be they Catholic, schismatic or Protestant, Jew or pagan, good or evil. Oh, reign over all of us and in all of us, poor inhabitants of this terrestrial globe that flies through space in the heavens . . .

We, for our part, accompanying our wishes with our work and paying personally the price of our efforts, our goods, our health, our reputation, and our life, and with Your powerful help (for alone we can do nothing), we will liberate for You the maximum number possible of souls from the slavery of the devil, of the world, and of the flesh, and, having been made happy, we will offer them to You as Your property until we meet with You, little Mother, in Paradise . . .

95. Let us permit her to do in us and through us whatever she desires, and she will surely accomplish miracles of grace. . . . She will conquer, through us, the whole world and every single soul.

Let us hasten this moment by deepening our consecration to her by an ever more perfect obedience, an assimilation of our will and hers, a union that is so intimate that it succeeds in almost eliminating the differences between our will and hers.

96. Bend the proud neck of the world before the feet of the Immaculate: this is the end of the M.I.; conquer the whole world and every single soul to her, and this as soon as possible, as soon as possible, as soon as possible, and the reign of the Sacred Heart of Jesus will take dominion over the world through her.

It is absolutely necessary to conquer the whole world to her so that the dominion of sin cease.

97. Humility and obedience. Conquer the world to the Immaculate.

98. The Immaculate will conquer, through us, the whole world and every single soul.

99. After death we shall be, as it were, images sanctified by the Immaculate that will glorify her, spreading and deepening love for her.

Contra Hostes Tuos

100. I get irritated sometimes when I'm reading something and I notice that the author underlines with an excessive precaution that Our Lady is "after Jesus" all our hope. Obviously this can be understood in a proper way. Nonetheless this exaggerated worry not to omit this little clause—which is no doubt intended as a sign of veneration for Jesus—is rather, I think, personally, on the contrary, offensive to Him.

Let us take an example [from our own publishing activity]: When the ordinary machines became insufficient, we added the rotary press, and we can rightly affirm that, in order to print *The Knight* on time, all our hope is placed in the rotary press. But if each time we said so someone were to add with a worried air: "Yes, but after the factory that constructed it," we would manifest the conviction that this machine could fail and that it would be necessary to have recourse to the factory. All of which would indicate that the factory had not constructed the machine with the necessary solidity, something which would certainly not be to the honor of the factory.

How little the Immaculate is known still, in theory and even less in practice! How many prejudices, misunderstandings, and difficulties agitate many souls! May the Immaculate grant to her Niepokalanóws to illumine this darkness, and dissipate these cold clouds, and revivify souls and inflame them with unbounded love for her, with full liberty, without these vain fears that restrict and chill the hearts of men! So that the King not be sought outside of His palace, but within, deeply within its interior, in its inner rooms.

101. Yesterday I was reading a book in French on the Immaculate. The authors have such hesitations about that which concerns the honor of the Divine Mother. They are of the opinion that though it is fitting to honor Mary, like the devil they do not want to bow before her; but as soon as temptation presents itself, they immediately panic and start having doubts whether they should pray to the Lord Jesus or to the Divine Mother. . . .

We who are here, dear brothers, let us not let ourselves be fooled by the devil. We believe in the Immaculate, we believe that she is, after God, the most perfect, the holiest, the most powerful being that exists. Why do I tell you that?

It is so that if the devil tries to attack you, you won't believe him. And even if wise and learned theologians come and preach wise and sublime things, but teach you something else than what I have taught you, don't believe them. And even if—I don't know how—saints come, who are saints four times over, if they teach you something else, don't believe them. With the help of the Immaculate you will do all things.

Listen to what St. Paul says in his letter to the faithful: "Even if an angel of heaven were to come and teach you something other than what I have taught you, let him be anathema!" (Gal. 1:8-9). In the same way I repeat to you, if someone rises up among you who does not want to honor the most holy Mother and to do so in a special way, if he dissolves the close link that unites us to the Immaculate and teaches you something else than what I have taught you, let him be anathema. . . . We believe that the Immaculate exists and that she leads us to our Lord Jesus Christ, and if someone teaches otherwise, let him be anathema! Let him be anathema!

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5. SK 634, July 28, 1935.
6. SK 654, Nov. 1935.
7. K 103, Sept. 25, 1937.
8. SK 1225, Feb. 2, 1938.
9. SK 1306, Aug. 5-20, 1940.
10. SK 1317, Aug. 5-20, 1940.
11. SK 1219, *Rycerz Niepokalanej*, Dec. 1937.
12. SK 1310, Aug. 5-20, 1940.
13. SK 1295, 1940.
14. SK 542, Nov. 2, 1933.
15. K 284, Oct. 19, 1940.
16. SK 925, Dec. 1, 1940.
17. K 25, June 13, 1933.
18. K 25, June 13, 1933.
19. K 85, June 20, 1937.
20. K 180, July 3, 1938.
21. SK 643, Oct. 10, 1935.
22. SK 1298, early 1940.
23. SK 1301, Aug. 5-20, 1940.
24. SK 1226, Brochure, March 1938.
25. SK 1310, Aug. 5-20, 1940.
26. SK 1160, *Rycerz Niepokalanej*, May 1932.
27. SK 1248, Conference to clerics O.F.M. Conv. at Cracow, Nov. 15, 1919.
28. K 131, Feb. 17, 1938.
29. K 62, Jan. 20, 1937.
30. SK 605, Nov. 10, 1934.
31. SK 1212, Dec. 7, 1936.
32. K 37, n. 5, June 26, 1936.
33. K 284, Oct. 19, 1940.
34. SK 698, Dec. 29, 1936.
35. SK 339, April 29, 1931.

36. K 31, Aug. 28, 1933.

37. SK 1248, Nov. 15, 1919.

38. SK 339, April 29, 1931.

39. K 35, April 23, 1936.

40. K 169, May 7, 1938.

41. SK 687, Nov. 11, 1936.

42. Fr. Joseph Pal, *Beatificationis et canonizationis Servi Dei M. Kolbe . . . Positio Super Virtutibus* (Rome, 1966) II, 152.

43. SK 428, May 30, 1932.

44. K 36, June 23, 1936.

45. K 41, July 5, 1936.

46. K 167, May 1, 1938.

47. SK 1220, *Rycerz Niepokalanej*, Dec. 1937.

48. K 286, Oct. 22, 1940.

49. SK 1334, Aug. 5-20, 1940.

50. SK 687, Nov. 11, 1936.

51. K 247, June 16, 1940.

52. SK 504, April 9, 1933.

53. SK 609, Dec. 28, 1934.

54. K 29, July 1933.

55. K 75, n. 3, May 6, 1937.

56. K 183, Aug. 2, 1938.

57. SK 1263, July 1932.

58. SK 1334, Aug. 5-20, 1940.

59. SK 56, Jan. 26, 1921.

60. SK 755, Nov. 4, 1937.

61. K 8, May 29, 1932.

62. K 105, Oct. 2, 1937.

63. K 109, Nov. 6, 1937.

64. SK 742, September 1937.

65. SK 738, Sept. 13, 1937.

66. K 99, Sept. 1, 1937.

67. SK 605, Nov. 10, 1934.

68. K 31, Aug. 28, 1933.

69. K 41, 2, July 5, 1936.

70. SK 605, after Nov. 10, 1934.

71. SK 503, April 9, 1933.

72. *Positio Super Virtutibus*, II, 109.

73. SK 1248, Nov. 15, 1919.

74. K 25, June 13, 1933.

75. SK 461, Oct. 27, 1932.

76. K 71, April 25, 1937.

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78. SK 461, Oct. 27, 1932.

79. SK 508, April 12, 1933.

80. SK 1168, March 3, 1933.

81. SK 486, *Letter to clerics of the O.F.M. Conv.*, Feb. 2, 1933.

82. K 29, July 1933.

83. SK 1291, notes written before May 1939.

84. SK 382, Dec. 2, 1931.

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90. K 129, 4, Feb. 15, 1938.

91. K 314, Feb. 10, 1941.

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95. SK 556, Feb. 8, 1934.

96. SK 1301, Aug. 5-20, 1940.

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98. SK 556, Feb. 8, 1934.

99. K 311, Feb. 5, 1941.

100. SK 603, Nov. 10, 1934.

101. K 204, Dec. 31, 1938.

This is a mystery which surpasses our intelligence, therefore we cannot fathom it. We will not learn it in books, but only on our knees.

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